

REMARKS

Claims 2 and 3 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 1, 4 - 6, 8, 9, 12 and 14 have been amended in order to more particularly point out, and distinctly claim the subject matter to which the applicants regard as their invention. The applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added. It is believed that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated June 23, 2006.

At the outset, the applicants thank the Examiner for now indicating that claims 3 - 11, 14 and 15 contain allowable subject matter, and would be allowable if amended in the manner suggested by the Examiner in item 3, page 3 of the outstanding Office Action.

However, claims 12 and 13 have been objected to because of an informality in claim 12. The applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this objection.

Claim 12 has been amended in order to correct the noted informality. Accordingly, the withdrawal of the outstanding objection to claims 12 and 13 is in order, and is therefore respectfully solicited.

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/775,333
Response filed September 19, 2006
Reply to OA dated June 23, 2006

As to the merits of this case, claims 1, 2, 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Camps (U.S. Patent No. 5,097,460). The applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this rejection.

In order to help expedite the processing of this patent application to issuance, the applicants have incorporated the subject matter of claim 1 and the allowable subject matter of claim 3 into independent claim 1. Claims 2 and 3 have thereafter been canceled.

In view of the incorporation of the subject matter of claim 2 and allowable subject matter of claim 3 into independent claim 1, claim 1 should now be similarly allowable.

In view of the cancellation of claim 2, the rejection of claim 2 is now moot. Also, claims 12 and 13 depend on allowable claim 1; thus, claims 12 and 13 should now be similarly allowable.

Accordingly, the withdrawal of the outstanding anticipation rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) based on Camps (U.S. Patent No. 5,097,460) is in order, and is therefore respectfully solicited.

Claims 4 - 6, 8, 9 and 14 have also been amended so as to directly depend on claim 1 in order to have the remaining claims continue to be allowable.

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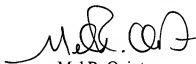
In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, claims, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, the applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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